

**From:** Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy  
**Sent:** 12/31/2011 8:07:38 PM  
**To:** "Trish Taylor" <taylor.trish@epa.gov>  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** Residents Across PA Need Your Help

TO: Trish Taylor,  
U.S. EPA Region III Community Involvement Coordinator

Dear Ms. Taylor,

I know you are busy with the Dimock water situation, and I was grateful to learn that the EPA has decided to take another more careful look at the effects nearby drilling may have had, but as a resident of Susquehanna County in a neighboring township, I feel the need to also ask for the EPA's involvement for myself and the rest of Pennsylvanians living atop the Marcellus Shale region who may be affected by the drilling, but will have no recourse except to be at the mercy of the drillers and our industry sponsored lawmakers.

While the studies on hydro-fracking continue, and the long-term effects are as yet "un-proven", history as well as the more recent evidence still being collected, would suggest that Hydro-fracturing in its present form across PA (or anywhere else for that matter) is anything but safe for the thousands who live in the Shale communities – most of whom are considered "low risk, class 1 areas", and with the constant development of facilities not properly regulated or inspected by the O&G industry or by our local authorities. These include such activities as horizontal fracturing of gas wells, "flaring" of gas wells sometimes lasting weeks or months, large new compressor stations, massive amounts of new high pressure pipelines, significant water withdrawals from surface fresh water sources, waste water impoundments, and waste water high pressure injection wells. I have done some homework and I have learned that there are MANY standards and regulations that could be implemented for all of these facilities to ensure better protection to life and property.

While many communities and states across the country have at least been carefully considering the on-going research and making better attempts to protect the water supplies and air quality before proceeding further, our Governor continues to ignore any and all potential risks in favor of unimpeded exploration and development by the O&G industry, and continues to provide it shelter from any real liability for damages to landowners and rural communities. This continued effort to simply "drill baby drill" in PA while the jury is still out on its effects and necessary regulations for preserving our water and air would not be quite so horrific if there was at least some procedure in place to protect the individual casualties in this, but there simply is not, and no attempt is made by our State Government to provide one. It is almost as if we are suddenly in a new war, living on the new "front line", and we are considered nothing more than "collateral damage".

Here in my community, I have been told by the local drilling company that if I sign a gas lease and I find that my water goes bad, they will immediately provide me with a "water buffalo" and fresh water supplies while they investigate the cause. While this emergency measure seems ok on the surface, it has also become apparent that the industry and our own PADEP will do everything in its power to relieve the drilling companies of any liability, and then the fresh water supplies will stop. Of course just knowing that your water was fine before the drilling/fracking started, and even having a water test to prove that, then shortly after drilling or even a year later when the gas well needs to be re-fracked, your water suddenly no longer freezes, or has a funny odor and color, and maybe even extremely high methane levels and lights on fire, but this is deemed not sufficient "proof" to warrant further investigation without the help of an attorney – something most of us cannot afford in order to defend ourselves. If you signed a lease, I guess that's not as bad, as you will probably be receiving some

royalties for your trouble and, even though your property is now worthless to a potential home buyer, you may still have the funds to hire attorneys for the long battles ahead, or just to move and get out of the way of the drillers. For those who have not signed gas leases for whatever reason, there is simply no recourse but to hire an attorney and spend the next several years tied up in litigation and incur expenses that most people here can ill afford. These people will also not be able to sell their homes and simply move away, but will have to find other water sources in the meanwhile at their own expense. There really has to be a better way to ensure the protection of the citizens in these rural communities.

I have signed no leases for my small 5 acre property and in the event that my water becomes damaged, I cannot afford the cost of an attorney to defend myself. I have recently heard that one suggestion by the EPA is for landowners to have regular on-going water testing performed, but after recently having my own baseline testing done in advance of nearby drilling activity, to the cost of \$800 for including adequate parameters to "prove" my water is currently clean and free of any potential drilling substances, is NOT something I could afford to do on any "on-going" basis, and in fact, even with such on-going tests, I would still need an attorney to present my case. In the past, when I've had my water tested, it was simply for the basics and at a relatively low cost. Although the tests consistently came back negative for the presence of bacteria, this sort of test is apparently not adequate to determine a solid baseline with respect to potential drilling contaminants. So, with respect to your suggestion of on-going water testing, who is to pay for this extremely high cost to cover the substances that now can appear due to drilling activities? Surely not the landowner who had no choice in this onslaught to his property, and certainly not the taxpayers of the community since this is really a private industry concern. I have heard that some are now considering suing their neighbors who have signed leases and have rigs on their properties where drilling activity has damaged neighboring properties water. The thought here being that, "these neighbors should be easier to sue than the O&G companies". I guess as long as everyone is busy suing everyone else, there's just no need for PA lawmakers to step in and provide some REAL measures for holding this private industry accountable and liable for damages it leaves in its wake. To me, this is just not acceptable and even quite insane. (although I guess it does create quite a few new job opportunities for lawyers!).

It is time for the EPA and the Federal Government to step in to protect its citizens. Regardless of the objections of the PA lawmakers, who have found that it is easier and more profitable to sway their constituents rather than to actually serve them, we MUST have the EPA step in and assume some authority over the regulatory processes for O&G in PA. Our State Government can no longer be allowed to protect only some of the residents – those in more densely populated cities, or in wealthy communities where our lawmakers call home. While these people are certainly subject to the longer term effects on air and water quality, those living in the actual "ground zero" areas need your help NOW, and we cannot wait another 1 to 3 years while you complete your research before better accountability for damage is required.

I hope you have a very happy New Year, and I look forward to more EPA involvement in PA O&G regulations in 2012.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter, and for your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

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P.S. I wasn't really sure who to send this to, so please forward it on to any appropriate persons or departments.

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**Susquehanna County**

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